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# Winter Council Chat



## The Quarterly Newsletter of the New Hampshire Family Support Councils

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# January-April 2010

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### **Region I (North Country)**

Region I would like to wish everyone a Happy New Year! The North Country is planning some new initiatives in 2010. Our first newsletter will be published in January, the Winter Edition, and we plan four quarterly newsletters in our first year. Kim Astles is working on this project, and has volunteered to prepare the newsletter, gather articles and information. She'll then have it printed and mailed to nearly five hundred families. We are also planning to develop a series of workshops/trainings for families. A survey is in the works to find out what families need, such as workshops on the IEP process, guardianship and transitioning. We interviewed a new Family Support Coordinator, she was hired in November. Her name is Karen Nelson. She will be providing services to families in Carroll County. This will ease the workload of Shanon Smith and Stacey Bilodeau who were covering the entire region. Welcome Karen! Video technology is coming to the Littleton area, already available in Berlin. This is crucial during the winter months when driving is not an option to allow the council to meet regularly. We raised \$231.20 in our Tupperware fundraiser. We hope to plan more fundraisers in 2010!

*Submitted by: Kim Astles*

### **Region III (Lakes Region)**

The Family Support Council (FSC) in Region III established three goals for the year and reviews its progress monthly. We've redesigned the format of our monthly agenda to always include the language of the goals with accompanying notes of action taken and potential next steps. Using this new system keeps us on task and enables us to quickly and easily evaluate our progress. This may sound minor, but for us, it's created a more focused, efficient group. We sponsored a summer barbeque, which was attended by approximately 80 family members. Reaching out to families by offering a relaxing afternoon was successful, and it is our intention to provide a different type of entertainment next year. In order to hear from more families in Region III, the FSC discussed hosting small, informal gatherings across the region. Rather than specifically seeking new members for the FSC (although we certainly would welcome new members), we just want to talk with families to get a sense of what they need or want from the area agency. Our Family-to-Family Coordinator and one of the FSC members are currently involved in the New Hampshire Leadership Series. Two new FSC members and one veteran attended the State Family Support Council Retreat at Steele Hill Resort in October. Sharing experiences with people from around the state helps us

generate new ideas for the benefit of our region.

*Submitted by: Susan Michaelis Gunther*

#### **Region IV (Concord Area)**

Three council members attended the State Council retreat on October 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> at Steele Hill Resort. We came away with a renewed energy and great ideas for the upcoming year. Over 20 people took part in a great family activity on October 9th sponsored by the Council as a focal area event. Many families participated in family style BINGO. We had a great gathering of people who ate food, played Bingo, won prizes and had a great time with each other. The Council will be hosting a dinner on Thursday December 3<sup>rd</sup> with the hopes of increasing our council membership and building a "Friends of the Council" network. The Council is currently participating in the Pittsfield Community Coalition meetings in Pittsfield. It is a great opportunity to participate in the community events that are happening for all youth in the Pittsfield area. The Council will be hosting a public viewing of the documentary, "Including Samuel." The viewing is tentatively scheduled for January 2010 in the New London/Sutton area.

*Submitted by: Terri Warren*

#### **Region VI (Nashua)**

The Family Support Council at Gateways Community Services has been busy over the last quarter. In September, Council members attended the Board of Directors Annual Meeting and recognized and thanked outgoing Chair, Michael Umali, for all of his hard work during his tenure as Chair. In October, the Council welcomed new member, Larry Lutton. In November, the Council sponsored an evening with John Kitchen, Esq. for families to learn about Special Needs Trusts. The FSC continues to support its Recreation Ticket program that enables families to purchase recreation tickets at a reduced cost. We are currently working on revising our By-Laws and instituting recognition for past and current Chairs of the Council and to recognize members of the Council according to years of service. We are

## **Council Chat: January-April 2010**

also in the process of creating this year's Employment Grant program to include parent sessions and a student work component.

Gateways will be hosting a Holiday Party on December 13th for all of the families that it serves.

*Submitted by: Mary Franck*

#### **Region IX (Dover Area)**

The Family Advisory and Partners in Health councils sponsored a Hayride in Durham on October that was attended by 110 parents and children from Family Support, Early Supports and Services and Partners in Health. A local church group joined in the fun to mix with families and help as needed. The council this year has put aside funds to pay for someone to do futures planning with families as they plan for transitions in their lives. We have received donations for food baskets for families for Thanksgiving and gifts for families in need over the holidays. Because of an increase in the number of families asking for help with day to day expenses, the council funded a special edition of the newsletter devoted to accessing community resources.

*Submitted by: Karen Salter*

### **Greetings from the Bureau of Developmental Services**

Happy Holidays to one and all! This is the time of year when I think about the multitude of supports that regional Family Support Councils and regional Family Support Directors and Coordinators provide to families. Many thanks to you all for the hard work that you do on behalf of individuals and families.

The 2009 State Family Support Council Retreat was held in October at the Steele Hill Resort and was attended by Council members from across the state. Thanks to our presenters, facilitators and participants, this year's Retreat provided a valuable opportunity for Council members from across the state to network, discuss their challenges and successes and develop goals for addressing important issues.

If you are interested in contributing to the planning for next year's Retreat, please let your State Council Delegate know. The State Family Support Council welcomes your input and suggestions.

During the Retreat, a presentation was made about the **Supports Intensity Scale (SIS)**. The SIS is a nationally and internationally recognized assessment tool that measures the supports needed for individuals with developmental disabilities to be successful in all aspects of daily life. The results from the Supports Intensity Scale (SIS) assessment can be used in the development of the service agreement and for developing individualized budgets. The New Hampshire Bureau of Developmental Services is moving forward on a project to implement the SIS as a component of service planning and will be making information about the assessment process available to area agencies, families and individuals. If you would like more information about the SIS assessment, please go to: <http://www.siswebsite.org/>. If you would like someone to visit with your Council to answer questions about the implementation of the SIS, please contact me at: [lreagan@dhhs.state.nh.us](mailto:lreagan@dhhs.state.nh.us).

I wish you a happy, healthy and joyous holiday season and look forward to working with all of you in the New Year.

*Submitted by: Lorene Reagan*

### WORK and HEALTH – Did you know?

- ❖ There's a Program that allows Medicaid eligible individuals to work and earn over \$75,000 and still keep Medicaid?
- ❖ Did you know that in this Program you can save approximately \$25,000 in the bank and continue receiving Medicaid?
- ❖ Did you know this program is called "MEAD"?

Work and health - it's not just a novel idea – we just keep hearing that people are happier and financially better off when they say they work. The Medicaid for Employed Adults with Disabilities (MEAD) offers people with disabilities an opportunity at the possibility for an improved quality of life. The Program is designed to allow individuals to increase their work hours. Once they reach a 'net income' of \$1,355 or approximately \$32,500 gross, they start paying an insurance premium to stay in the Program. Earning over \$75,000 is possible because the premium structure is designed to increase as the individual's earnings increase. Talk with someone who is on MEAD, and you'll probably hear how it's made a difference in their life. Individuals can work part-time. They can also receive home and community-based care waiver services while in the MEAD Program and have no cost of care.

The MEAD Program is for people age 18 through 64, who have a job, and who meet the disability criteria established by the state. A person who works must also contribute to FICA, the Federal Insurance Contribution Act that comes out of their paycheck. To apply for MEAD, individuals need to go to their local Department of Health and Human Services 'District Office.

For more information, request our new MEAD brochure, or go to the DHHS web site at: <http://www.dhhs.state.nh.us/DHHS/MEDICAID/PROGRAM/mead.htm>

You can also call the MEAD Help Line at 1-800-852-3345, Ext 0020, or 271-0020.

Family groups or organizations interested in having a free MEAD Presentation during the day or evening, may submit a request to: Denise St. Onge at 271-7224 or 1-800-852-3345, Ext. 7224 or by email at [Denise.StOnge@dhhs.state.nh.us](mailto:Denise.StOnge@dhhs.state.nh.us)

*Submitted by:*

Denise St. Onge  
MEAD Program Manager  
DHHS/Bureau of Developmental Services  
603-271-7224

**State Family Support Council  
Meeting Schedule  
2010**

February 1, 2010  
April 5, 2010  
June 7, 2010

**Meeting Location:**  
New Hampshire Hospital  
36 Clinton Street  
Concord, NH

Meetings start at 6:00pm and end at 8:30pm.

**THE COUNCIL CHAT IS NOW BEING  
PUBLISHED ON A  
QUARTERLY BASIS**  
**NEXT CHAT DEADLINE: Please send your  
information for the next Chat issue by:**

**March 1, 2010**

Information can be sent via email to:  
[lisaricci@dhhs.state.nh.us](mailto:lisaricci@dhhs.state.nh.us)

or

via Fax: 271-5166

or

via Mail:

Lisa Ricci

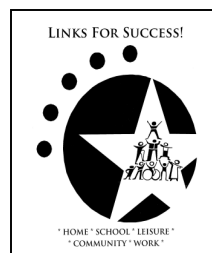
Bureau of Developmental Services  
105 Pleasant Street  
Concord, NH 03301

The Council Chat can now be accessed online  
from the Bureau of Developmental Services  
Website. You can find it by going to:  
<http://www.dhhs.state.nh.us/DHHS/BDS/family.htm>



## **SAVE THE DATE**

**NH Family Support Conference**  
**April 30, May 1 & 2, 2010**  
**At The Mount Washington Resort**  
**Bretton Woods, NH**



The 24th Annual Family Support Conference offers families and caregivers the opportunity to learn about possibilities and choices for their family members with a disability, to meet others, and share experiences. Mark your calendar for this exciting event!

**Registration Fee:**

\$135.00/week-end or \$105.00/one day (13 & over)

\$62/week-end or \$52.00/one day (children ages 4-12)

**Hotel Accommodations:**

\$152.00/night – single/double occupancy/Night

\$174.00/night – triple occupancy/Night

\$196.00/night – quad occupancy/Night

**Keep an eye on your mail for the  
conference flyer,  
coming out in February 2010**

**For More Information  
Or to receive a brochure,  
Contact Peggy Sue Greenwood,  
Conference Coordinator at  
603-271-5010 or by email at  
[PGreenwood@dhhs.state.nh.us](mailto:PGreenwood@dhhs.state.nh.us)**

The Council Chat is a newsletter for New Hampshire Family Support Council Members. The newsletter is distributed to all Family Support Council members, Family Support Coordinators, and Area Agency Executive Directors statewide.

If you would like to provide information for a future newsletter please send your ideas or articles to:

*Council Chat*  
Attention: Lisa Ricci  
Bureau of Developmental Services  
105 Pleasant Street  
Concord, New Hampshire 03301  
[lisa.a.ricci@dhhs.state.nh.us](mailto:lisa.a.ricci@dhhs.state.nh.us)

If you would like to talk with a staff member directly, you can reach someone at the Bureau of Developmental Services by email or by calling 1-800-852-3345 and then dialing one of the following extensions:

Lorene Reagan, Administrator, BDS Child & Family Supports and Services, extension 5019,  
E-mail: [lreagan@dhhs.state.nh.us](mailto:lreagan@dhhs.state.nh.us); or

Carolyn Stiles, Director, NH Part C (Early Intervention), extension 5122, E-mail:  
[cstiles@dhhs.state.nh.us](mailto:cstiles@dhhs.state.nh.us); or

Lisa Ricci, extension 5060, E-mail:  
[lisa.a.ricci@dhhs.state.nh.us](mailto:lisa.a.ricci@dhhs.state.nh.us)